

CIACO

NID 81 [REDACTED]

October 13, 1981

POLAND: Government's Proposal

The regime's proposal on Sunday that Solidarity join a commission to deal with certain economic problems is a conciliatory gesture that signals continued interest in a dialogue. [REDACTED]

Formation of the commission--which would discuss food supplies, rationing, and price increases--would be an important step toward institutionalizing the union-government dialogue. The regime probably hopes a joint commission will ease the way for the next round of price increases, which it wants to take effect late next month. The authorities would like to have Solidarity share some of the burden of unpopular economic decisions. [REDACTED]

The union probably will be wary of joining such a group. Solidarity has long sought a role in overseeing food distribution, something it might gain by participating in this new commission. Union officials, however, want any agreement on price increases to be linked to the broader issue of economic reform, over which the two sides still have major differences. [REDACTED]

The union leadership remains under pressure to make some gains in talks with the government. Several restive local chapters seem determined to make good on threatened warning strikes, despite a call yesterday by Solidarity's presidium to end all protest actions for 10 days. The government over the weekend averted strike actions in two regions by agreeing to negotiate directly with local Solidarity representatives. [REDACTED]

Soviet Commentary

Pravda--in an article today by A. Petrov, a pseudonym for Soviet Politburo views--repeated earlier, lower level Soviet charges that the program passed by the recent Solidarity congress is an attempt to destroy socialism in Poland and to seize political power. It stated that the preservation of socialism in Poland is not only a domestic question, but one that affects the vital interests of all socialist states. [REDACTED]

The article, though tough, is no ultimatum and omits previous lower level criticism of Polish authorities by Moscow. The Soviet commentary suggests that Soviet leaders have not yet determined how hard to press Warsaw for action against the union, or how extensive that action should be. [REDACTED]

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